

The VISITOR



I must have dozed a moment at the corner of the fire,
As the crystal midnight sounded from the chapel's slender spire,
For I woke upon a sudden, with the bells' exultant din,
To find another Christmas, shod with silence, stealing in!
Is it fact or is it fancy? On the eaves, above my head,
Rings the clink of silver harness, and a swift and stealthy tread,
And an echo, as of laughter, sets my pulses all aglow—
St. Nicholas has found me, as he found me long ago!

Ah! those half-forgotten wakings, in the gray of early light,
When I crept from out my blankets, like a little gnome in white,
And my eyes shook off the cobwebs that the sandman in them spun
As they saw, beside the chimney what the merry saint had done:
The soldiers in their boxes, the tidy butcher shop,
The little wooden villages, the trumpets and the tops!
And I had nigh forgotten—for how was I to know
St. Nicholas would find me as he found me long ago?

He came while I was dozing, and has strewn his gifts galore
In bewildering confusion by the chimney on the floor.
Though my eyes alone can see them, though they last me but an hour,
Are they less for that a witness to the changeless olden power?
He has left me fairy stories, where I play the leading part,
He has given me back the lightness of my blithe and boyish heart.
He has filled my fire with visions, shifting softly to and fro—
St. Nicholas has found me, as he found me long ago!

My trumpet is the tinkle of the brook I learned to wade,
My soldiers the remembrance of the martial games I played,
My music-box the voice that used to call me "little son,"
When the twilight fell around us, and the busy day was done;
My candles are the remembrance of a myriad early joys,
My strings of bells the laughter of the other romping boys,
My uniform is youth again, with all its golden glow—
St. Nicholas has found me, as he found me long ago!

Though transient as the embers, yet brighter, brighter far
In all their dear delusion his shadowy presents are,
For the years like snow have melted, with their erring and their pain,
And I stand upon the threshold of Arcadia again;
Let them die as die the embers, let them vanish as they came,
I have had my Christmas treasures, and the world is not the same;
With his wand of sweet remembrance for an instant bending low,
St. Nicholas has found me, as he found me long ago!

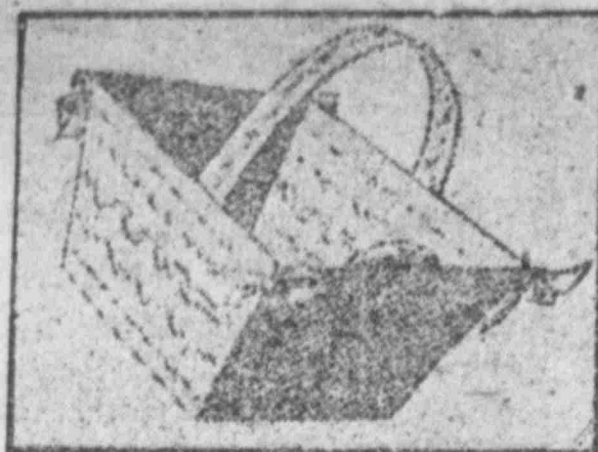
Youth's Companion.

If all the Bell telephones made each year were blended into a single instrument, it would be nearly 300 miles high and weigh 4,000 tons.

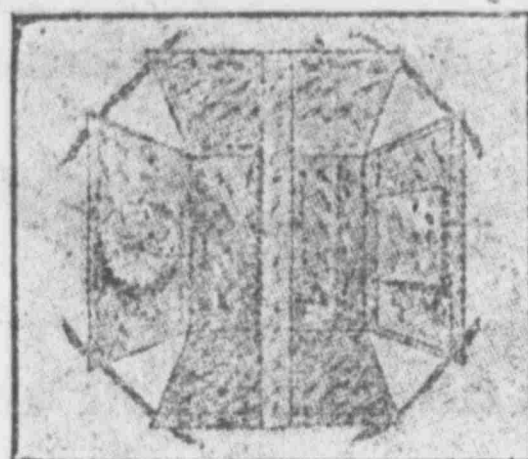
Italy leads the nations of the world in the matter of theatres.

GIFTS THAT A CHILD CAN MAKE.

An inexpensive workbasket may be made of pasteboard covered with cretonne. The five sections, with handle, are covered separately and sewed together, over and over, as shown. The handle is cut the length of the basket when opened. A cushion and needle book are sewed to the sides. Small brass rings are attached at the corners through which to tie ribbons and draw the basket into shape. This basket is easily packed for traveling, as it can be laid flat and then drawn up quickly to hold a bit



of fancy work or small trinkets. The cretonne selected should have a small figure or a vine running lengthwise, and the basket is prettier if the pattern runs narrow across the handle



and in lines round the outside. Pockets for spools may be added if desired.—From Youth's Companion.

The American Pose.

The American woman has a special gift for falling unconsciously into good poses.—London Queen.

Alice in Toyland.



Jack-in-the-Box—"Hands off, there!"
Alice—"Why his hands are off, silly!"

When Fairy Tales Were Really So.
I wish I'd live long, long ago,
When there were mermaids in the sea,
And brownies would have played with me,
And fairy-tales were really so.
Of course, there still are lots of knights,
And there are princesses besides,
But nowadays men don't win brides
By going off on dragon-fights.
I wish I'd lived long, long ago,
When fairy-tales were really so.
—Mary Street, in December Lippincott's.

Christmas in the Klondike.



Alaska Ike—"Wot did yer find in yer stockin' this mornin'?"
Chilcoat Pete—"Frostbitten toes."

THE BEST WISHES OF THE SEASON

IO the Solitary, the dwellers apart, by choice or by chance, with hearth-fires that for one burn dull and for two would glow and sing—to all of these,

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

IO Them that are set in Families, where love, bestowed with no thought of its return, passes back and forth abundantly between open hearts—to all of these, parents, children, kinsmen, friends,

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

IO the Poor and the Rich, envying each the others' freedom from the cares of too little and too much, yet learning year by year that without health and enthusiasm and faith and love, none can be rich, and with them none can be poor—to these,

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

IO the Workers, the vast fortunate majority, in humble places and in high, often baffled and disheartened, questioning if there is not somewhere for them a greater work with a greater reward; yet happy at the last, if they will have it so, in seeing the figure they have wrought in the fabric of living, a figure drawn by the great Designer for their weaving and none other's—to all of these,

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

IO Old and Young, with the years' behind and the years ahead, years that show but a span in the centuries since the Light first shone from Bethlehem upon the paths of service, humility and sacrifice, and gave to all the ages a spirit that has made them one; to Young and Old, treading with gladness these lighted paths, even though not always knowing whence the Light comes—to all,

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

M. A. D. W. H.

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